

***Public Spaces Commission***  
***Meeting Minutes for October 4, 2021***

5:30 PM –6:32 PM EST

**Commission Objectives:** Review the names of public facilities and spaces and the relevant history surrounding the namesake through the lens of whether the namesake participated in the oppression of African Americans, Indigenous Americans, and other communities of color and whether the namesake contributed to the nation’s history of systemic racism and similar biases. Recommend any names that should be changed, contextualizes, or added for consideration for future naming of assets.

**ATTENDEES:** The following were in attendance:

<b>Committee Member Names</b>	<b>Attended 10/4/2021</b>
Allison Jessing	X
Ani Begay Auld	
Barb Walters	X
Dr. Denise Boston	X
Dr. Robert Harris	X
Everlene Cunningham	X
Janssen Evelyn	
Kelly Palich	
Kori Jones	X
Marcus Nicks	
Moyah Panda	X
Nicole Patterson	X
Shawn Gladden	X
Stephanie Wall	X
Tina Ligon	
Towanda Brown	X
Wayne Davis	X
Others (still members)? Tara Simpson	

**Guest: Various Guests were in attendance**

**Call to Order:**

Meeting was called to order at 5:02 pm

**Roll Call:**

A roll call of the attendees was done. Those who were in attendance can be found in the Attendees section above.

**APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:**

September meeting minutes were reviewed and unanimously approved

**CURRENT BUSINESS:**

An update was provided about where we are currently and how we are progressing to the final goal of the deliverable of the report. In the new business section, we will discuss next steps and recommendations for the report.

**CRITERIA TEAM**

- Acknowledgement to the criteria team for the compiled information and thanks to the team that was led by Kori

**RESEARCH TEAM**

- An update was provided regarding the research team by Wayne. A consistent and approach and format was provided for the data sheets. The time to do the research was limited; however, the goal was to have consistency across the work that was done. Each of the below fields to be populated were described that will provide a quick preview, summary, and photograph where applicable.

**Howard County Naming Commission – ID: \_\_\_\_**

<b>Historical Name of Structure –</b>	
<b>Classification</b> – School ____ Building ____ Park ____ Road ____	
<b>Location –</b>	
<b>Construction Date -</b>	
<b>When/Who Named –</b>	
<b>Reason for Name –</b>	
<b>Version Number -</b>	<b>Date Updated –</b>

- The data sheets are being updated regarding version and information updates and being used as the main information sheets. Source citations are also referenced.  
ACTION ITEM: Shawn will review the citations.

- Shawn provided acknowledgements for those working on the data sheets as they are frantically working to complete them. Buildings were the first data sheets completed. The research team is Kelly is working with recreation and parks team on the historic building. Allison is working on seven data sheets in the library and Jessica is working as well.
- Nicole Patterson is leading the proofing team to make sure information is consistent and has the same stylistic approach. Dr. Boston and Towanda have volunteered to assist to ensure the report looks cohesive.

### NAME RECOMMENDATIONS

- The Commission was asked to provide names to the County Executive for future considerations as there are historical names who have no recognition. It is particularly important to have a sampling of the names of the historical figures in the report. After much discussion, it was agreed to provide a sampling of 10-12 names and list the other names with the referral source, in the report. This report is supposed to be a “conversation starter.” We should careful not to present it as a comprehensive listing.
- There were 34-38 name recommendations; however, only eleven are in the folder. Some came from the Historical Society, the Center for African American History and Culture as well as the public which includes letters from the community. Dr. Cunningham and Dr. Harris have been working together to review the suggested names. The names were divided with Debbie as well; however, Dr. Cunningham has been unable to contact Debbie and the status of her names is unknown. The goal was to provide a summary with a few lines about the significance of the person to Howard County and who recommended the person.
- The team requested an opportunity to discuss the recommendations as this is a product coming from the Commission. This information is to be included in the November 5<sup>th</sup> report. There is a lot of work to do and a short amount of time. There is not clarity on how the selected samples should be chosen. It was confirmed that the recommended people did not have to be deceased. The caveat is that they shouldn't be in politics or currently running for office. A few examples:
  - Silas Craft has a number of recognitions...is he someone that should be further recognized? He is not recognized in a public space. Should we present names that have not been previously presented or memorialized?
  - Herman Charity was the first Black police officer in the county. Does he deserve the recognition just because he was the 1<sup>st</sup>? There are others who should be recognized as their impact spreads across many areas.
- A few names such as Oliver Gilbert who is the equivalent of Frederick Douglas with nothing named after him in the County and Hezekiah Brown were discussed. Are they included in the list?

- There was an agreement to have another meeting next week for a work session to discussion how to do the recommendation section. ACTION ITEM: Shawn to schedule - suggestion for the end of the week for Thursday/Friday. ACTION ITEM: Dr. Cunningham to provide the recommendation material prior to the meeting so it can be uploaded to the Google drive so everyone has access to it.

## FINAL REPORT

- There was discussion about the final report format. Stephanie clarified that the final report is not a draft report or a “living report.” It is a final report with recommendation on what we’ve done thus far. The following were recommended:
  - Introduction with remarks from Chair which discusses the methodology and action plans
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> section is the executive order and criteria
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> section will be the data sheets
  - 4<sup>th</sup> section will be future naming section
  - 5<sup>th</sup> section will be letters sent into the Commission
  - Last section will be what we recommend for the next steps. This should be phase 1 and there should be a 2<sup>nd</sup> phase to this process
- There is a question on how to get this final report done within a month period of time. Need a specific timeline/deadline for the report to be submitted and in the hands of the County Executive, which should be the last date. Within 2 weeks it should be complete. Shawn mentioned that the goal is November 5<sup>th</sup>.

## **NEXT STEPS:**

There was some discussion regarding what should be included in Phase 2.

- It was recommended that the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase have some continuity. The 2<sup>nd</sup> phase may be a new Commission to explain what we did and assist phase 2 with the community feedback and questions.
- Phase 2 should be people looking at the report with the opportunity for public feedback. This will be the final part for suggestions for changes to be made.
- For the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase, there is need for additional research at some point to fill in gaps. If the public recommends names, it is not reasonable to expect all of the background needed to come through to facilitate a complete review.

## **ACTION ITEMS:**

1. Create and share a form that has the information with the criteria and opportunity to provide information and field for description written out. After receiving the list of suggestions, there is the opportunity for deeper research on the people that have

been nominated to ensure it is proper and appropriate for the community?

**Assignee: Stephanie**

2. An announcement will go to the community about submitting names in the next couple of weeks. **Assignee: Stephanie**
3. Create a sample survey and craft questions. Can pattern after the Public Safety townhall that is coming up. Provide a criterion that will be considered. Once open up for engagement, there will be all kinds of engagement. Are we limiting? Only those in Howard County? **Assignee: Dr. Cunningham and Dr. Harris**
4. Tina needs help with construction dates. Issue at National Archives...racism task force. They are now getting inundated because the story was run by Fox news. **Assignee: Shawn**
5. Timeline of action items to get to the November 5<sup>th</sup> due date to Stephanie. **Assignee: Shawn**
6. Produce a statement that can be handed off to team members to apply to the worksheet. **Assignee: Shawn, Nicole, and Wayne**
7. Shawn will review the citations. **Assignee: Shawn**
8. Shawn to schedule a meeting to discuss the name suggestions for the end of the week for Thursday/Friday. **Assignee: Shawn**
9. Dr. Cunningham to provide the recommendation material prior to the meeting so it can be uploaded to the Google drive so everyone has access to it. **Assignee: Dr. Cunningham**

Move to adjourn at 6:28 pm.

Next Meetings: -Next meetings is November 1, 2021

Minutes submitted by Towanda Brown